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Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

Extension of the first country cooperation framework for Burundi

Note by the Administrator

Period of extension: 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001

I. Background and justification

A. Socio-economic context of the country

1. The first country cooperation framework (CCF) for Burundi was approved at the third regular session for 1998 for the period 1998-2000. The CCF was prepared with the full cooperation of the Government established in June 1998 and that of the General Assembly; it was also the subject of broad consultation with the donors in Burundi and all the organizations of the United Nations system.

2. The CCF was prepared in a context of political crisis combined with an economic embargo, which, since October 1993, continues to keep the security environment fluctuating. In the absence of genuine national plans and strategies and credible institutions, the CCF was designed (a) to contribute to the restoration of minimal conditions for the cohabitation of the various population components and (b) to mitigate the impact of the crisis.

3. Currently, circumstances have not greatly improved with regard to the living conditions of the population and the macroeconomic situation. However, at the political level, with the recent signing of the peace agreement and the establishment of the Follow-Up Committee, Burundi is embarking on a period of establishment of transition institutions and resumption of development assistance, in particular with the holding of an international conference in Paris in early December. Moreover, United Nations organizations in Burundi have agreed to harmonize their programming cycles beginning in 2002; the common country assessment is being

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drawn up; and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework will be prepared during the year 2001.

B. Justification of extension

4. The Government, after consultations with the country office, has decided that it is not appropriate to draw up the cooperation framework in the current circumstances: the security situation on the ground combined with political uncertainty and the absence of a not inconsiderable number of development partners; the culmination of the Arusha peace process, which will permit the resumption of cooperation; the need to harmonize the programming cycles of the organizations of the United Nations system beginning in 2002; and concern to create the synergies necessary for the implementation of the programme.

II. Objectives

5. Generally speaking, in view of the foreseeable context in the country, UNDP support will be focused mainly on political dialogue, the strengthening of institutional capacities and support for the elaboration of policies, strategies and plans for the promotion of development side by side with the peace process.

Governance

6. UNDP will continue its support for the peace process and the establishment of transition institutions with a programme to strengthen the capacities of the National Assembly and the judicial system. The institution of the "*Ubushingantabe*" (group of wise men) will be the cornerstone of national reconciliation based on the promotion and defence of human rights. UNDP will support the Government in creating a favourable environment for the promotion of a viable and competitive private sector with a view to the progressive opening up of Burundi to the global economy.

Community development

7. The results envisaged in this area during this extension phase are the continuation of direct support for grass-roots communities and institutional support for decentralized structures for management training. The combating of AIDS will be addressed both through the formulation of a framework programme of support for the national strategic plan and at the level of support for local organizations involved in combating AIDS. Repatriated and internally displaced persons will be targeted with a view to permanent resettlement that gives them access to basic social services and means of production. New information and communication technologies will be utilized in this process of combating poverty.

The environment and food security

8. The objective envisaged is to make all intervention in the environment a real instrument for combating poverty. UNDP support will be focused on legislation and regulations giving the poor equitable access to the country's natural resources, including land.

Equivalence of men and women

9. Promotion of the equality of men and women will be regarded as a cross-disciplinary theme, and specific indicators will be defined in each programme. Moreover, there will be a focus on improving the regulatory legal environment with a view to the equality of men and women.

III. Recommendation

10. The Administrator would like to inform the Executive Board that, in the light of the foregoing, he has approved the extension of the first country cooperation framework for Burundi for a period of one year, beginning on 1 January 2000.